

What They're Saying About...

The Wyden-Coats Tax Fairness and Simplification Act

Originally introduced in 2010 with then-Senator Judd Gregg, the Bipartisan Tax Fairness and Simplification Act of 2011 differs very little from the previously introduced version.

- “The last thing this country needs is another partisan battle over taxes. Senators Wyden and Gregg should be commended for trying to focus the debate on what this country really needs, comprehensive tax reform that will make the tax code work for everyone. Our hope is that Congress will give their legislation the serious consideration that it deserves.”

Rosanne Altshuler
Director, Tax Policy Center
Senior Fellow, The Urban Institute

- “A huge growth and jobs killing tax hike looms next year unless the tax laws are changed. The Gregg-Wyden plan points in the right direction: lower tax rates on a broader base. While all of us will have our own proposals for improvement, let's hope it fast tracks the urgently needed tax debate.”

Michael J. Boskin
Professor of Economics and Hoover Institution Senior Fellow,
Stanford University
Former Chairman, President's Council of Economic Advisers

- “Since the 1986 Tax Reform Act, our tax system has become more and more complex. A bipartisan effort to reform the tax system is long overdue, and Wyden and Gregg should be applauded for starting this discussion on such a constructive note. Their plan would simplify our tax system, improve efficiency, and create a good starting point for making the tough tax decisions that will be required to restore fiscal balance in the future.”

Kimberly A. Clausing
Miller and Mintz Professor of Economics
Reed College, Portland, Oregon

- “The Tax Fairness and Simplification Act of 2010 clearly moves the ball in the right direction, both in terms of tax policy and economic stimulus. Particularly promising are provisions to eliminate the Alternative Minimum Tax, reduce and simplify the corporate and regular income tax rate structures, and the provisions to expand tax free retirement accounts. These provisions will lower the cost of investment and entrepreneurship and increase capital formation.”

Roy Cordato
Vice President for Research, John Locke Foundation

- “I commend Senators Wyden and Gregg for tackling the problem of tax simplification. Tax complexity undermines the ability of American firms to chart their strategic investments and to compete effectively in the global marketplace. Lowering the corporate tax rate to the OECD average is one of the most effective ways to promote job creation and international competitiveness for America's manufacturers, who have been so hard hit by the recent recession.”

Thomas J. Duesterberg
President & CEO, Manufacturers Alliance/MAPI

- “Senators Gregg and Wyden are to be commended for making a serious effort to bring significant tax reform back into the spotlight. They have paid particular attention to increasing the incentives to save for middle income Americans, and have pointed to the high level of corporate taxes in the United States as an issue that deserves attention in a competitive global economy. We hope this proposal will begin a debate on how best to achieve a tax system that is simpler and less damaging to capital formation and growth than the current one.”

Stephen J. Entin
President & Executive Director
Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation

- “Our current tax code is riddled with unwarranted subsidies and excess complexity. Senators Wyden and Gregg should be congratulated for taking an important first step in launching a much needed discussion of fundamental tax reform. By bravely taking on many of the hardest and most contentious issues in tax policy in a bi-partisan effort, Senator Wyden and Senator Gregg have shown true leadership.”

Michael Ettlinger
Vice President of Economic Policy, Center for American Progress

- “We commend Senators Gregg and Wyden in this bipartisan effort. Cutting taxes is always good medicine, especially for an ailing economy,” said Steve Everley, Policy Manager at American Solutions for Winning the Future. “The best way to create jobs is to reduce the tax burden on Americans and American businesses and this bipartisan agreement is only a starting point. Ultimately lower taxes on business leads to job creation and that must be the focus.”

Steve Everley
Policy Manager, American Solutions for Winning the Future

- “With the White House and virtually everyone in Congress looking to further complicate an already incomprehensible tax code, scrap it in favor of a hidden VAT tax or other schemes to increase the treasury's ability to squeeze more money out of middle class taxpayer or simply confiscate the earnings of the most successful Americans, the approach Senators Wyden and Gregg are taking is refreshing. Their ‘bi-partisan’ plan is far from perfect, but the goals of simplification, fairness and tax reduction come at the problem with the right goals in mind; their plan is a far better starting place for a real discussion of reform than most.”

David Keene
Chairman, American Conservative Union

- “The Wyden-Gregg tax reform plan contains many pro-growth elements that would be dramatic improvements over the current tax code. Foremost among them is cutting our competitiveness-crippling corporate tax rate, including corporate capital gains, from 35 percent to 24 percent. Wyden-Gregg also eliminates the AMT and prevents the impending hike of the top marginal individual tax rate. These are key pro-growth measures and we commend Senators Wyden and Gregg for including these elements in their proposal.”

Phil Kerpen
Vice President for Policy, Americans for Prosperity

- "Reforming the tax system is critically important for entrepreneurs and our nation's competitiveness. I commend Senators Gregg and Wyden for their commitment to this task as their plan will bring stability and certainty to the tax code, which in turn will help business owners better plan for their growth needs. This bipartisan effort is a sound start towards fashioning a tax system that enhances investment, entrepreneurship and long-term economic growth. Small business owners appreciate the leadership of Senators Gregg and Wyden, and we encourage their colleagues to model the collaborative spirit they bring to this important legislative effort."

Karen Kerrigan
President & CEO, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

- "Senators Wyden and Gregg are to be congratulated. This is a serious and well-specified tax reform proposal, not a few talking points to grab air time. The plan would eliminate many harmful tax subsidies, reduce business taxes, finally solve the alternative minimum tax sword hanging over the heads of middle class Americans, and reinject fairness into the tax Code. We would be a stronger country if this were enacted, preferably tomorrow."

Edward D. Kleinbard
Professor, USC Gould School of Law
Former Chief of Staff, U.S. Congress' Joint Committee on Taxation

- "Ron Wyden and Judd Gregg have shown what true bipartisanship can accomplish. Harking back to the days when President Ronald Reagan, a Democratic House and a Republican Senate could work together to enact the monumental Tax Reform Act of 1986, they have drafted a tax reform bill that offers Americans a much simpler, fairer and economically sounder tax code."

Robert S. McIntyre
Director, Citizens for Tax Justice

- "Wyden-Gregg would constitute a significant advance over current law for economic growth and tax simplification."

James C. Miller III
Former Director, Office of Management and Budget

- "The [Wyden-Gregg] plan has more good than bad elements, and can be a positive starting point toward meaningful tax reform efforts."

Grover Norquist
President, Americans for Tax Reform

- "Sending taxpayers a one-page summary of Federal spending is a big step toward a more rational discussion of debt and deficits. Polls show Americans think over 50 percent of the Federal budget is wasted; liberals think it all goes to wars, conservatives think it all goes to welfare and foreign aid. If people knew that half the budget goes to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and interest on the debt, everyone would recognize the need for tough choices on taxes and spending."

Steve Novick
Former environmental lawyer, U.S. Department of Justice,

Former Communications Director, Citizens for Oregon's Future

- “Senator Gregg and Senator Wyden undertook a Herculean task and are to be commended for their thoughtful consideration of the difficult issues inherent in truly comprehensive reform of our income tax system. The legislation would tackle some of the biggest problems with the current system - problems that waste resources and impede economic growth and international competitiveness, such as complexity, the alternative minimum tax, corporate tax rates 50 percent higher than the OECD average, provisions that distort decisions about levels of debt and choice of entity, and disincentives to small business investment. The Senators' bipartisan leadership on a politically challenging, certain to be controversial, but hugely important subject is refreshing.”

Pamela Olson
Former Assistant Secretary for Tax Policy
U.S. Department of the Treasury

- “[T]he Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW) applauds the effort to open a bipartisan dialogue about real tax reform, an issue that has become increasingly important in the face of the nation’s dire economic situation. Congress can no longer afford to kick the can down the road on tax reform; taxpayers need relief now more than ever.”

Thomas A. Schatz
President, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

- “Although we continue to believe that the entire 2001 and 2003 tax reduction packages should be made a part of permanent law, the Wyden-Gregg legislation makes admirable progress in preventing for most taxpayers the higher burdens that will result when those packages expire next year. We commend the Senators for recognizing the importance of preserving as much tax relief as possible for everyone, including the many small business owners in the top bracket who’ve been targeted by other lawmakers for huge tax hikes...Nonetheless, Senators Wyden and Gregg have given the process of tax reform more than just a start – they’ve provided an honest, thoughtful plan which, unlike many others, deserves to be part of the debate over how the federal tax system can be restructured to benefit our nation’s citizens and its economy.”

Pete Sepp
Vice President for Policy and Communications
National Taxpayers Union (NTU)

- “As Congress begins to address the expiring 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, Senator Wyden is rightly presenting a plan for comprehensive tax reform. Simplifying the tax code, closing loopholes and tackling tax evasion are reforms that all Americans and all businesses can agree upon. The Oregon Center for Public Policy looks forward to working with Senator Wyden on much needed tax reform legislation.”

Chuck Sheketoff
Executive Director, Oregon Center for Public Policy

- “Senators Wyden and Gregg have proven that there is more common ground on tax reform than is generally believed. Tax changes that improve international competitiveness and remove harmful distortions are not just common sense, they are essential steps that must be taken soon if the United States is to remain the premier economic superpower.”

Marc Sumerlin
Former Deputy Director, National Economic Council

- “The Act would vastly simplify the tax code, while reducing the distortions that hinder saving, investment, and job creation. Uncertainty over the tax code is having a real impact on the U.S. economy. This bill would be a huge step in the direction of a stronger economy and a more prosperous United States.”

Phill Swagel
Former Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy
U.S. Department of the Treasury

- “America's overriding fiscal objective should be maximizing economic growth. That can be accomplished only by reducing spending ("Right Sizing" Government) and cutting taxes. The Gregg-Wyden plan is an excellent start on the tax reduction side of the ledger.”

Lewis K. Uhler
President, National Tax Limitation Committee

- “The American Legislative Exchange Council fully supports reforms that simplify our tax code for individuals and businesses alike. Reducing our burdensome corporate tax rate and eliminating the alternative minimum tax will provide a tremendous amount of stimulus for our economy and will greatly aid the states in their quest to attract global capital.”

Jonathan P. Williams
Director, Tax and Fiscal Policy Task Force
American Legislative Exchange Council